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## **MONTANANS CELEBRATE RULING ON U.S. BEEF SAFETY AT STEAK-AND-EGGS BREAKFAST**

*Finance Chairman Baucus urges Korea, China, Japan, other nations to lift unfair bans on U.S. beef  
as World Animal Health Organization issues new standards certifying safety*

**Washington, DC** – Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.) turned a weekly coffee for Montana constituents into a steak-and-eggs celebration this morning, one day after the World Animal Health Organization (known as OIE) certified once and for all the safety of U.S. beef. Baucus, whose committee oversees U.S. trade policy, says the ruling erases the excuses of several U.S. trading partners who currently maintain unfair, unscientific bans on U.S. beef imports. This morning's breakfast – where the menu included specially-delivered Montana steaks, eggs, and biscuits – was also attended by diplomats from the embassy of Korea, whose nation Baucus has pressed to end its beef ban.

**“I’ve pushed nations from Korea to China to admit that their bans on U.S. beef have no basis in science, and now the world authority on food safety has confirmed that’s true,”** said Baucus. **“The World Trade Organization recognizes the OIE’s word on animal health as final. Now U.S. trading partners must admit safe U.S. beef into their countries, or they’ll violate international trade rules. It’s time for safe, delicious U.S. beef – particularly Montana beef – to take its rightful place on store shelves around the world.”**

A number of nations, including Korea, China, and Japan, banned U.S. beef several years ago after a cow in Washington state tested positive for bovine spongiform encephalopathy, or BSE. Those bans have persisted despite the fact that U.S. beef has consistently met safety standards set by the OIE for bone-in and boneless beef, regardless of age. Baucus has led the charge to reintroduce U.S. beef into closed markets, traveling to Asia and inviting diplomats to Montana to eat Montana beef and to visit a Montana ranch

This year, Baucus said that he will not consent to a pending free trade agreement with Korea until that country admits all U.S. beef into its market. Korea’s President has indicated that Korea will abide by whatever standards OIE sets for beef safety this week. As noted, Baucus says the OIE’s ruling this week should also pave the way for open beef trade with other key trading partners, including China, Japan, and Russia.

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